

in a little close shed, from which he escaped through a broken window-pane. He alighted on a limb of a tree only three or four feet from the window, and I had a good look at him. He seemed to be shivering with cold, but still active. He is quite tame, and very freely goes about among the cattle and hogs searching for food. If we could only get hold of him we would give him better quarters within doors, for it seems scarcely possible that he can long survive such temperature. He evidently 'got left' when the autumn migration took place, and his 'inherited experience' was too limited to prompt him to attempt the journey alone.

P.S.—Jan. 2, 1885. The Chewink is still here. This afternoon I caught him in an out-building. We looked him over and let him go. He is in good condition—sound and plump—despite our -40° temperature! He is solitary and alone, no birds of any species being about.—CHARLES ALDRICH, *Webster City, Iowa*.

Cowbird Wintering in Western New York.—A few weeks ago my attention was called to a strange bird which was feeding on the street with *Passer domesticus*. On getting a good view I saw it was *Molothrus ater*. The egg from which it was hatched was probably laid and hatched in a Sparrow's nest, and the bird, reared by the Sparrows, failed to mingle with the rest of its species. I have seen it a number of times since, and a young man told me last week that he saw it nearly every day. I am quite anxious to know if it will survive through the winter with its foster parents. Being itself a vagabond, it is a fit companion for *Passer domesticus*.—J. L. DAMON, *Lockport, N. Y.*

Nest and Eggs of *Calypte costæ*.—In a paper read before the January meeting of the Ridgway Ornithological Club, descriptive of the Californian Trochilidæ, reference was made to the finding of a nest and eggs of *Calypte costæ*. Considering the rarity of the nests and eggs of Costa's Hummer, perhaps a description of them may not fail of interest to the readers of 'The Auk.'

Three nests of this bird were found by the writer at Arrow-head Hot Springs, San Bernardino County, Cal., May 15, 1883; but unfortunately but one set of eggs was secured. One set was accidentally shaken from the nest; the other nest was out of reach.

Finding no account of the breeding habits of the bird in question in such books as are at my disposal, I wrote to Mr. H. W. Henshaw for information, who regretted that he could not enlighten me, not having met with the bird in any of his wanderings; but he was of the opinion that nothing had been recorded respecting the nest and eggs of this species. He, however, kindly forwarded my letter to his friend Mr. L. Belding, of Stockton, Cal., with request to send what information he could bearing on the subject. Mr. Belding writes concerning *Calypte costæ* as follows:—

"I have met it at various places, — Guaymas, on the east side of the Gulf of California, at La Paz, Cape St. Lucas, Cerros Islands, and other localities on the west side of the Gulf, but never recorded much concerning

it, as its manners were quite similar to those of other Hummingbirds of my acquaintance." He also says, "You will find two nests described by Mr. Ridgway (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. V, p. 542). These nests, like all I have seen, were in shrubs or small trees, the highest only about six feet from the ground, in a palo-verde, or gum tree. Each of the nests described held two eggs; but I lost or broke one from each nest."

So it would seem from this that Mr. Belding met with mishaps as well as myself.

Arrow-head Hot Springs are distant about five miles from the town of San Bernardino, lying a mile or so up the side of the San Bernardino Mountains. In the neighborhood of the Springs are several small cañons, running back into the mountains, the sides of which are clothed with such trees as alder, sycamore, and mountain laurel. Among these the Black-chinned Hummer (*Trochilus alexandri*), as well as the Costa, were breeding quite abundantly, and building their nests in close proximity to, or overhanging, a beautiful mountain stream, which wound its way down between and over the mighty boulders. The locality was extremely picturesque. These Hummers constituted about all of the bird life of the cañon.

Speaking of one set of eggs of *C. costæ* being accidentally shaken out of the nest recalls to mind an incident which I also find in my field notebook, viz:—

"We had been noting how persistent the females were in occupying their nests, even after they had been frightened away from them several times. In one case I held my hand about a foot from one while she was on the nest, without any fear being evinced on her part, until an attempt was made to catch her; this manœuver was repeated a number of times, when she would always return to the nest and sit there as unconcernedly as possible. Finally my companion struck at her with his hat and hit her, at the same time striking the bough that the nest was on, precipitating her and the eggs into the stream below." A most tragic end, indeed, to such a peaceful existence!

Incubation was very far advanced in this set, as was proven by one of the eggs dropping upon a flat stone near the water's edge, on which a well-formed chick was deposited, which would have hatched in a day or two.

The nest containing the two eggs saved, which is now before me, measures 1.60 inches in diameter externally; 1 inch in internal diameter; and .60 of an inch deep on the inside. In make-up it is altogether different from any Hummer's nest that I ever saw, being destitute of all cottony and downy substances usually employed by Hummingbirds in constructing their dwellings.

In this case the main body of the nest has the appearance of a mass of spider webs, small bits of dried leaves, and leaf-bud scales, interwoven in a compact mass. By examination, I also find that the birds have utilized the remains of an old nest in forming the foundation for this one, which was built partly in the fork of one of the lower branches of an alder tree, and situated between five and six feet from the ground. A few feathers line its interior.

The eggs were in a somewhat advanced stage of incubation, and some difficulty was experienced in blowing them. They are a trifle smaller than the eggs of *T. alexandri*, and considerably smaller than those of *T. colubris*. Their color strikes me as being not so pure a white as the eggs of the latter. As the male bird was not observed in the vicinity of the nest, I may add that the female was shot and afterwards identified by Mr. Ridgway, which fact should be sufficient guarantee of the correct identification of the specimens.—B. T. GAULT, *Chicago, Ill.*

Curious Food for the Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*).—A few years ago I examined the contents of the stomachs of two young Kingfishers (*Ceryle alcyon*), and found, to my surprise, instead of the usual remains of fish, fragments of various beetles (Coleoptera) belonging to the families Carabidæ, Dytiscidæ, and Scarabæidæ, the Carabidæ and Scarabæidæ being exclusively inhabitants of the land. Among the Scarabæidæ an almost perfect specimen of *Aphodius fumetarius* was recognized.

Mr. A. P. Chadbourne, of Cambridge, Mass., who shot both the birds in question, has furnished me with the following information. He says: "The Kingfishers were shot at Kennebunksport, Me., on July 14, 1881. They were both young birds, and were shot *in* the nest with a collecting pistol. I observed one of the adults on the ground in a ploughed field near the river side, but did not shoot it. The young were fully feathered and able to fly."

I am ignorant as to whether the food of the young of this species has been studied by any one else or not, but is it not possible that they may be fed regularly by their parents upon insects?—R. HAYWARD, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Occurrence of the Sharp-shinned Hawk in New Hampshire in Winter.—Mr. Wm. Little, of Manchester, N. H., writes me that a specimen of *Accipiter fuscus* was killed there Jan. 24, 1885, by Geo. H. Walker, and mounted by Hiram P. Young. This is, I believe, the first recorded instance of its capture so far north in winter.—JNO. H. SAGE, *Portland, Conn.*

[It may be of interest to add that a female Sharp-shinned Hawk was taken in Cambridge, Mass., Dec. 15, 1884, by Mr. Joseph L. Goodale, who has the specimen in his collection.—J. A. ALLEN.]

Early and Accidental Occurrence of *Catharista atrata* and *Tantalus loculator* in Kansas.—Dr. Louis Watson, of Ellis, Kansas, wrote me April 14, 1885, of the capture on the 27th of March, of a Black Vulture, a species not before noticed there. Also that "A Wood Ibis barely escaped capture March 26. It had been about the Creek (Big Creek) on my premises for several days; but after receiving a charge of No. 6 shot at short range rose over the bank with a drooping leg, and has not been seen since. It is almost *incredible* that it should be here, or anywhere else so far north, so early."—N. S. GOSS, *Topeka, Kansas.*

The Glossy Ibis and Avocet at San Diego, Cal.—On January 1, while on my way to the Santa Margarita Valley duck-shooting, I noticed a small